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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4320  
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1259  
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1097  
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY 0602  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 001973

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/16/2016  
TAGS: [ECON](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [HA](#)  
SUBJECT: PREVAL EMPHASIZES DRUG TRAFFICKING, SECURITY AND  
DONOR DISBURSEMENTS WITH CONGRESSWOMAN JACKSON LEE

PORT AU PR 00001973 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

(C) 1. Summary: During a 24 hour visit to Haiti in support of the Haiti Support Project, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee met President Rene Preval October 9 to discuss U.S.-Haitian relations. President Preval asked for the Congresswoman's recognition of continued drug trafficking through Haiti to the U.S., which adds to the insecurity in Port-au-Prince. He acknowledged that the security situation had improved over the past month, although he said it is too soon to call GOH efforts a success. Preval also stressed the importance of rapid donor disbursements for the current fiscal year, complaining that disbursements are often slower than promised. The Congresswoman's visit was well received by the local press, particularly her message that the Haitian Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement (HOPE) Act still may pass the U.S. Congress this year. End Summary.

(SBU) 2. Congresswoman Jackson Lee came to Haiti on an unofficial visit October 8 - 9. She traveled down Route National 1 adjacent to the Cite Soleil slum to see Minustah deployments, visited a private children's hospital funded by USAID, and met with President Preval. As the first member of Congress to visit Haiti since Preval's inauguration, the Congresswoman congratulated the President on a successful inauguration and tenure so far, and encouraged him to visit Washington to push HOPE legislation. She told President Preval that at the most recent Hemispheric sub-committee meeting Haiti received high marks, particularly concerning its human rights advances, from administration witnesses.

Fighting Drug Trafficking is Beyond Haitis Capacity

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(C) 3. When asked by the Congresswoman how the U.S.-Haitian relationship could be strengthened, Preval said that Hiti's needs were accurately identified at the Jul donors, conference. However, he specified that drug trafficking to the U.S. was one of the his primary concerns. Haiti is neither a producer nor consumer, yet dealing with the resulting insecurity is beyond the capacity of the national police force (HNP), according to Preval. The President suggested that the U.S. and Haiti should update the accord

signed in 1998 that gave the Coast Guard access to Haitian waters. As an aside, he joked that "refugees" leaving Haiti are stopped by the Coast Guard but that drugs en route to the U.S. are not.

#### The GOH makes Progress on the Security Climate

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(SBU) 4. Preval acknowledged that the security climate in Port-au-Prince has improved, but said that he thought it was too soon to publicize GOH progress on security. The government's objective, he added, is to disarm or at least keep the guns off the streets, and stop the inflow of weapons and ammunition to Haiti. He also noted that the HNP was moving into areas previously considered off limits. He explained that the security situation required his personal attention which is why he missed several international events like the UN general assembly meeting in New York and the conference for the non-aligned movement in Cuba.

#### Donors Should Speed up Disbursements

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(SBU) 5. Preval decried slow donor disbursements and asked the Congresswoman take this message back to Washington. He also mentioned that investments from the U.S. -- both purely commercial investments and potential investments from the Haitian diaspora -- would help alleviate Haiti's economic struggle.

#### Congresswoman Jackson Lee says HOPE is not Dead

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(U) 6. The local press reported that the Congresswoman would take a positive image of Haiti back to her colleagues on the hill to encourage increased U.S. assistance to Haiti. Concerning HOPE, the Congresswoman let the Haitian press know that the legislation still had a chance to pass the U.S. Congress, as early as November or December of this year.

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(C) 7. Comment: The high-level visit, especially one that could confirm Haiti's continued presence on the minds of U.S. politicians, clearly pleased the President. Preval was at ease during the meeting and appeared confident regarding GOH progress on security. He kept the meeting light, commenting on his pleasure in receiving a phone call October 7 from Secretary Rice despite her many "friends who keep her busy,"

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and joking about the U.S. Coast Guard's ability to stop "refugees" but not drugs. End comment.

(U) 8. Congresswoman Jackson Lee did not clear this message prior to her departure.

SANDERSON